



February, 2022  
the Society for the Promotion of Japanese Sword Culture (NBSK)  
Chairman: Yoshihara kuniie  
Chairman of the Steering Committee:  
Abe kazunori

## **The 12th Japanese Sword Craftsmens' Exhibition/Competition Guide**

Greetings,

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for your continued support of the activities of the Society for the Promotion of Japanese Sword Culture (NBSK).

As part of our activities as a Public Foundation, the 12th NBSK's Craftsmen's (co-sponsored by the Sakaki-Machi Museum of Tetsu) will be held in Sakaki-Machi in Nagano Prefecture in 2022.

Last year, was filled with uncertainty due to the Covid situation, but with the cooperation of everyone involved, including the Sakaki-Machi Museum of Tetsu, we had an opportunity to successfully hold the "11th NBSK's Craftsmen's competition and display important works by sword craftsmen.

The exhibition is in a competition format that recognizes outstanding works by giving awards (including the Minister's Award), and is open to both members and non-member of this association.

The results of all the craftsmen involved in the production of Japanese swords in the competition will be made publicly available in an effort to promote the culture of Japanese swords.

In 2021, the Treasure Hall (Important Cultural Property) at Meiji Shrine in Tokyo celebrated its 100th anniversary. However, on November 3 this year, celebrations for the 170th anniversary of the birth of Emperor Meiji will begin.

In commemoration of this event, in addition to this year's competition we will also hold a special exhibition of contemporary sword works sponsored by the Sword Association. Overview will be described later)

Along with the special exhibition, we are also planning public events. An outline of the event is explained below in order to give potential applicants time to prepare.

Based upon previous results, we are expecting even greater works to be exhibited this time.

## **【Outline of the Special Exhibition】**

In addition to the exhibition of prize-winning works from the 2022 competition/exhibition mentioned above, Samurai armor will also be exhibited with the cooperation of The Association for the Research and Preservation of Japanese Helmets and Armor. This is an excellent opportunity to promote Japan's proud samurai culture both domestically and internationally.

A special judging committee will convene at Meiji Shrine Treasure Hall to select extra works for exhibition in addition to the works exhibited at the 2022 competition.

The selected works from the award-winning works of the 2022 exhibition will be returned to their owners after the exhibition in Sakaki-machi has ended, but will be required again in October. Details to be announced at a later date.

The tentative name of the special exhibition is, Contemporary Sword Exhibition Commemorating the 170th Anniversary of the Birth of Emperor Meiji.

### **Venue:**

Meiji Shrine Treasure Hall (Important Cultural Property)

1-1 Yoyogikamizono-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151-8557

Date: Late October to late November, 2022

(in cooperation with Meiji Shrine).



[Meiji Shrine Treasure Hall (Important Cultural Property)]

### **Guidelines**

#### **1. Objectives.**

① As part the NBSK's aims to contribute to the improvement of the craftsmen's skills involved in all aspects of Japanese sword making and the nurturing of future craftsmen, we hold an annual open competition based on a new standards with strict evaluations.

② The results of the competition will be displayed in the form of a comprehensive exhibition in an effort to deepen the understanding of Japanese swords, sword crafts and culture. Additionally, it is our hope that exhibition will broaden the appeal of modern Japanese swords and related crafts overseas.

③ The NBSK foundation aims to support modern craftsmen, and build upon the traditions by holding exhibitions and events at various venues.

**2. Title.** The exhibition will be called: The 12th Japanese Sword Craftsmens' Exhibition.

**3. Venue.** The Sakaki-machi Museum of Tetsu  
6313-2 Sakaki-machi  
Sakaki, Hanishina County,  
Nagano prefecture,  
Japan 389-0601

**4. Duration.** June 11th (Sat), through August 28th (Sun), 2022.  
The awards ceremony and after party will also be on Jun 11th (Sat).

**5. Categories.** Sword-making (see Articles 9.1 and 9.2) and Horimono Carving, Polishing (licensed Japanese swords only), and three sections of fittings/mountings.

**6. Sub-sections.** Newly Made swords (see Articles 9.1 and 9.2), Horimono Carving, Polishing (see Article 9.1), Tsuba (and other tosogu), Shirogane (habaki and other kanagu), Shirasaya, Koshirae foundation, Tsuka-maki, Saya lacquering, and Koshirae.

**7. Sponsors.** Relevant ministries and agencies, and other private sponsors.

**8. Awards.** Special Award  
The Minister Award  
The Governor of Nagano prefecture Award  
The NBSK Chairman's Award  
The Award for Technical Endeavour, The Rookie Award,  
The Award for Merit  
Gold prize, Silver prize, Bronze prize  
Nyusen (accepted for entry)

**9. Points of note for applicants:**

**All entries**

① All Japanese blades must be accompanied by its original 'Firearms and Swords Registration Certificate', and comply with all the regulations.

② All fields are by open invitation. The results of the competition will be presented in the form of an exhibition. Entry is not limited to NBSK members, and anyone inside or outside Japan can enter. However, newly made swords are only accepted from licensed swordsmiths.

③ Entries will be judged at the exhibition venue.

④ Entries must be made, polished, or carved by the entrant. In the Tosogukoshirae section, joint entries are permitted. However, the blade, tsuba (and other tosogu) must all have the makers inscriptions. Please see the section on Koshirae for detailed information.

⑤ Works should be not have been entered previously. Therefore, works that have been made/performed within the past year.

⑥ Applicants can only make one entry per category. Different parts of a single koshirae cannot be submitted to different catagories. However, newly made swords can also be submitted to the polishing section.

⑦ Entries awarded prizes or nyusen may be included in the exhibition.

⑧ An entry fee of 15,000 JPY will be charged per item, per category for non-members. The entry fee for NBSK full members is 10,000 JPY.

### **Sword making**

① All swordsmiths entering works must hold a current license.

② Swords must be made using traditional materials and methods.

③ Swords must be in an appropriate polish befitting of a Japanese art sword.

④ Workmanship will be judged on its originality and individuality.

⑤ The submission of superior works of utsushi-mono (facsimile of famous works) is permitted.

⑥ There will be no distinction between tachi, katana, wakizashi and tanto. All will be judged on their merits.

⑦ Applicants who have held their license for less than three years are eligible for the Rookie Award.

⑧ Entries must be submitted within 12 months of the issue date on the license (torokusho).

### **Horimono carving**

① Migaki (polishing) should be completely finished.

### **Polishing (licensed Japanese swords only)**

① National Treasures, Important Cultural Property, and Important Art Objects are not allowed as entries.

② Polishes must be befitting of Japanese Art Swords.

### **Shirogane (habaki and other kanagu)**

① In the case of habaki with mon, foiled is preferred.

### **Saya-nuri (Saya lacquering)**

- ① Do not enter just the saya. The whole koshirae must be submitted.

### **Koshirae**

- ① Applicants must have contributed to the making of the koshirae, as well as the design and supervision. Just coordinating the manufacture of a koshirae is not in keeping with the spirit of the competition.
- ② In the case where older fittings have been used, the complete koshirae should be in accordance with that historical period.

### **Tosogu (fittings)**

- ① The submission of superior works of utsushi-mono (facsimile of famous works) is permitted.

### **10. How to Enter.**

- ① To enter, please fill out the attached application form and send it as an email attachment. Please ensure that the application form reaches the NBSK by Friday, April 8, 2022 (Japan time). Applicants will be sent an official entry form and a form for transferring the participation fee by around April 18, 2022. (You can also use PAYPAL)
- ② If we receive your works without receiving the entry form by the required date, your entry will be invalid.

**11. Submission of Works.** Please send or deliver them to the following address between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on 21st(Thu)and22th (Fri)of April, 2022.

The Sakaki-machi Museum of Tetsu  
6313-2 Sakaki-machi  
Sakaki, Hanishina County,  
Nagano prefecture  
Japan 389-0601  
Tel:0268-82-1128

**12. Judging.** Judging takes place for a period of three days between the 26th (Tue) and 28th (Thu) of April, 2022.

**13. Additional.** Exhibition Catalogue. All entries that receive 'Nyusen' or above may be published in the exhibition catalogue.

※ For further details, please see the homepage or contact the head office via email.

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